

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a network in which a plurality of terminals share one communication channel, signal collision is avoided and a predetermined signal is transmitted with a higher priority level. Priority levels are defined so that they are common to all the
5 packets to be sent by nodes (including terminals and relating devices) on a network. Respective slots that regulate timing for sending out packets are assigned to the respective priority levels. Each slot is determined with reference to a time at which an ongoing packet transmission on the communication channel has finished. The priority levels are allocated in such a manner that packets having higher priority levels (packets to
10 be sent out with higher priority) are allocated to slots having earlier timing.